

- **\*I John 1:1-7\*** The fellowship between the Almighty God and His creation of man is a most beautiful thing. The Creator and the creation living together in harmony just as God had designed should be the goal of each individual that walks on this earth. There is great joy that is found when this fellowship is present between God and His people. **(v.4)** This almost sounds too good to be true, right? God and man in harmony? That sounds awesome, and this fellowship is achievable if the right conditions are met! Man must seek to walk in the light because God Himself is Light. **(v.5)** If we walk in the light then we have fellowship with God and our sins are covered by the shed Blood of Jesus Christ. **(vv.6,7)** This should be our ultimate goal in this life, fellowship with God.
- It must be noted, however, that if it is possible for us to be in fellowship then it must be possible for us to not be in fellowship with God, and this is also talked about in the text that we just read together. **(vv.6,7)** For many people, this idea of man not being in fellowship with God means that God is the one that breaks the fellowship. It is His will that not all people will have fellowship and thus be saved, but this line of thinking contradicts much Scripture. **(John 3:16 & II Peter 3:9)** What then allows for fellowship to be broken between God and man? The answer is free will. While never expressly stated in the Bible, the principle of man's free will is obvious throughout its entirety. Adam and Eve chose to sin in the garden after God warned them about it. Pharaoh hardened his heart against God and wouldn't let Israel go. Joshua told the Israelites to **choose** who they would serve. And the examples go on and on.
- So with free will in mind, we must understand that man has the ability to walk in darkness and therefore they are no longer in fellowship with God. When man chooses to engage in sin, he cannot expect for a Holy and Just God to allow that type of person to continue on in fellowship with Him. When this happens, God respects our free will and He gives us up (leave man to his own desires) to whatever desire it is that we want to strive after, **which is a terrible consequence of our sin**. This brings us to our main, for this evening, of **Romans 1:24-32**. This evening I would like for us to examine what types of things God will give us up to.

**I. ...if our hearts lust for the world. (vv.24,25)**

- A. The Gentiles of **Romans 1** were content with lies concerning God and cared much more about this world and the desires of the creation.
  1. This is a broken world that is overtaken by sin and God cannot have any part of it.
  2. The one who wishes fellowship with God cannot love the sin that exists in this world.
  3. John speaks about that love for the world in **I John 2:15-17**. He makes the point that the love of God is not in the one that loves the world. Obviously, God cannot have fellowship with that which does not love him.
- B. We cannot serve two masters. If we love the world then God will give us up.
  1. In this life we can only serve one master. The context of **Matthew 6:24** is of materialism, but there are many other masters that we can serve in this life besides God.
  2. We cannot be in the light and in darkness at the same time. This is not possible, so if we try to love the world and the stuff of it then God will give us up to it.

**II. ...if our plans for human satisfaction alter His. (vv.26,27)**

- A. The Gentiles were guilty of ignoring the natural use of their bodies and instead seeking out that which was unnatural in homosexual relationships.
  1. The women burned in their desire towards one another and the men did the same thing.
  2. They were not satisfied with God's natural design.
- B. God has given mankind a proper and righteous way to fulfill their desires.
  1. One blessing of the marital relationship is the ability to satisfy the sexual relationship. **(Hebrews 13:4)**
  2. Mankind's desire for happiness can be satisfied as long as it is found within God's will. **(Psalm 1:2)**
  3. Man's desire for salvation must be satisfied come through God's plan.
  4. If we do not follow God's design for satisfaction then God will give us up to those actions.

**III. ...if our desire & acknowledgement of God ceases. (v.28)**

- A. The Gentiles no longer saw any need for God to be considered in their actions.
  1. This is what led them to worship the creature rather than the Creator. If they truly acknowledged God and all that He is then they would know that He is worth of their acknowledgement and desire.

2. Their moral corruptness (depravity) was allowed by God because, again, that was their decision.
  3. If they were going to desire for that which was carnal then God would allow them to do that. He wouldn't strike them down with lightning, but He allowed them to continue in their own desires.
  4. However, they would suffer the great consequence of not being in fellowship with God because He cannot be a part of that which is evil or wicked.
- B. Sadly, our society is going right down the same path of wickedness.
1. There is a dying desire for God within many of our neighbors. They are without need and therefore they don't desire God and His righteousness.
  2. Men are puffed up and they refuse to recognize the good that God has done in their lives. They refuse to acknowledge God and His goodness.
  3. Often, any mention of God is met with quick and harsh resentment and criticism.
  4. God will not put up with this disrespect. If man continually refuses to desire and acknowledge Him, then He will give them up to whatever their desire is.

#### **IV. ...if our path of sin continues. (vv.29-32)**

- A. Their moral corruptness and depravity lead them into all sorts of wickedness, and they were quite content with continuing in these things.
1. They were selfish in their actions. (greedy, full of envy, malicious, arrogant, boastful)
  2. They were full of hatred towards others. (murderers, gossips, slanderers, unmerciful, unloving)
  3. They were disrespectful of authority. (haters of God, disobedient to parents, without understanding)
  4. When God is not in the picture and there is no desire for God, then the limits of wickedness are without end.
- B. God cannot have fellowship with us and He must give us up if we are going to continue in that which is direct opposition to His very nature. In reality, we are deserving of death.
1. This was the story with Israel time and time again. They were to be faithful and then they would go after idols and immorality with other peoples.
  2. God's response would be to allow them to go and they would have to face the consequences of their actions.
  3. It is very clear from **Isaiah 59:2** that man's sins create a great separation between Him and God.
  4. When we continue in sin, God will allow us to continue on that path, but we will suffer the consequences of it.

#### **V. ...if our approval is given to that which is evil. (v.32)**

- A. Not only were those that practiced such things guilty of sin, but those who approved were guilty as well.
1. Not all the Gentiles were murderers, but those who condoned it were just as guilty of the sin.
  2. Not all the Gentiles were homosexuals, but those who condoned and celebrated the action were just as guilty.
  3. The practice of evil and wickedness and the approval of such carry the same punishment. Both are deserving of death, disfellowship, and God giving them up to it.
- B. This should really mean something to us, today.
1. There are so many things that are practiced today that are wrong and sinful in the eyes of God.
  2. Not only should we not practice them, but we ought to make it well known that we do not approve of such things as disciples of God.
  3. We must call that which is evil, evil and do all within our power to influence those around us to do good.

Fellowship with God ought to be our greatest goal because within that will we find God's grace and the promise of a home in heaven. We live in wicked days that require much courage on our behalf. May God help us to always remember to walk in the light and to glorify Him in all that we do. God will give us up, but only if we decide that the darkness means more to us than the light.